

For Immediate Release.

Office of Information, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture.

MIGRATORY BIRD LAW CONTINUES IN FORCE.

Washington, D. C.

A misleading statement has recently become current in newspapers of the Mississippi Valley and elsewhere, to the effect that the Department of Agriculture has suspended the enforcement of the Federal regulations under the Migratory Bird Law and by this means has enabled sportsmen, under State laws, to shoot wild fowl the coming spring.

Under the Federal regulations as they now stand, the season on all migratory wild fowl is closed until next autumn throughout the United States. Federal inspectors and wardens are required, and others interested in the protection of wild fowl are requested, to report to the Department of Agriculture all cases of violations of the regulations, in order that proper action may be taken.

The Department of Agriculture has no power to suspend the law or to pardon violations of the regulations. Doubtless the erroneous impression, on which the newspaper statements are based, has grown out of the pendency of litigation involving the constitutionality of the Act of Congress approved March 4, 1913, under which the regulations were promulgated. The lower Federal courts disagreed as to the validity of the statute and the issue was carried to the Supreme Court of the United States. The case was argued in the Supreme Court in October, 1915, but has not been decided. Following the lower court decisions, Congress appropriated money for the purpose of continuing the enforcement of the law. The Department of Agriculture is bound to report to the Department of Justice violations of the regulations if the Supreme Court should declare the law constitutional. All persons should, therefore, be warned of the danger they incur from failure to abide by the regulations.

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